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Brun. These prints had been brought from Paris by the owner of the house, framed and glazed as I saw them, the frames those narrow, black mouldings with gilded "pearls" in the cove which belonged to the time, and which went so well with the prints and even the pictures, these latter chiefly family portraits, which they inclosed. These prints, which I have not seen for many a day, were, as I remember them, strong and telling in their effect, vigorously engraved, and, as it happened, their shape exactly fitted them for the spaces, wider than they were high, that they had to fill. Each scene represented was complete in its own frame, but in some cases two of the copperplates pasted together sufficed for a scene, while others required three, or even four. And as some of the wall-spaces were longer than others, they were all fitted to their mind with the frames, and an effect almost like that of tapestry was unconsciously obtained.

If I have spoken at length of these prints it has been partly because I wished to recommend that the adaptation of pictures in shape to the shape of the wall-space they are to fill should be more thought of than it is in dressing our rooms. It is often more effective to hang one long frame, if we can get it, on a long wall-space than to hang three frames making up the same length on the same space. But long-shaped prints are not common, and certainly the time for such rich and stirring prints as these copperplates after Le Brun has long gone by, and for the most part the best we can do is to put several prints or photographs of the same character and effect into one frame, divided, if necessary, by mullions, and so secure the general appearance of length that is desired. In the case of the room I am describing the effect of lowness and cosiness that made so much of its charm was greatly produced by the accent given by these long prints in their narrow black frames.

The books, as I have said, were placed in cases that filled the whole of the side of the room opposite the two windows that opened toward the bay and the ocean. They were, therefore, in full light, and they gave an air of solidity to their quarter of the room, and met you as you came in at the door with a full-faced welcome. The long case was divided into three parts, each closed by two glazed doors, an arrangement of which I could not approve; I liked to get at the books without the trouble of opening those unwieldy doors. But, once opened, the books were easily accessible, and could all be reached without climbing. This is not the place to tell how it happened, but it was the fact that two-thirds of these books, which were in French, had come along with the prints and with much of the furniture and other prints and pictures in the house from Paris, and were a small part of the plunder of the châteaux and hotels of the Revolution; my grandfather, to whom they belonged, having bought nearly all the books on the streets, where they were piled up with a label stuck on each heap stating the price. Curious contents of a house in a remote fishing village in New England, and an odd way the good-natured fates took to influence the life and education of a New England boy. For here were not only the so-called classics, Corneille and Racine, La Harpe and Boileau, but Molière

and Rousseau and Voltaire. Here, too, were Swift and Sterne and Fielding, and a book long since forgotten that made an indelible impression, "The Political Justice of Godwin," a book that must have had a powerful influence in its time, if only it could be traced—but it seems long since to have spent its fire.

However it may be, I have never since seen a book-room or library that so filled my notion of what such a room should be as this one in the old house at Gloucester. It may have been the associations of the room with France, and with her ever-glorious Revolution; it may have been the situation of the room, or the heroic prints, or something in the expression of the chamber, with its low ceiling and its fireplace, where,

in summer the view from the window, the stillness, the seclusion, the faint hum of human life that came from the distant village—all blend together in memory's picture of the ideal library. C. C.

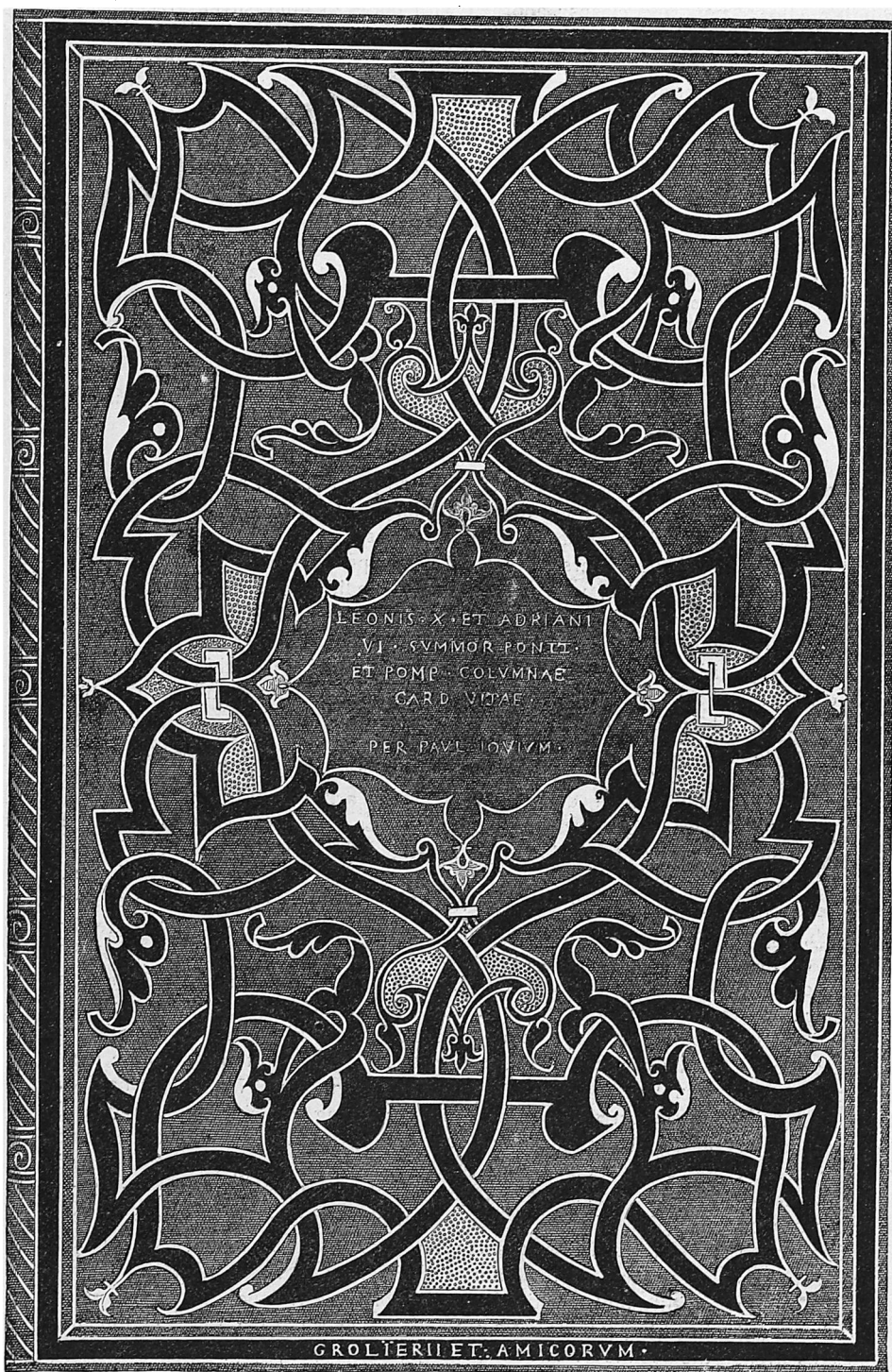
ARTISTIC BOOK-BINDING.

I.

"Ah! mon habit que je vous remercie!
Que je value hier, grace à votre valeur!"

How many worthless volumes that had the good fortune years ago to be bound by Le Gascon or Padeloup, may thank their rich coats, like the valet in the

French play, when they find themselves daintily housed on the shelves of some rich book-lover on the morrow of the sale of some great collection like the Sunderland or the Didot library! In that admiration of the arts of the past and that passionate and loving research of the masterworks of vanished hands which will be reckoned among the notable and honorable characteristics of the men of the nineteenth century, the art of book-binding has obtained a large share of attention. The old masters who excelled in fashioning and tooling book-covers, the Italian and Lyonesse artist of the sixteenth century who worked for Maioli, Grolier, Canevari, for the Medicis, for the d'Estes, for the Della Rovere, for Francis I., of France, for Diane de Poitiers, and other illustrious bibliophiles, artists like Le Gascon, Clovis Eve, Ruette, the binder of Kings Louis XIII. and XIV., Duseuil, Boyet, Padeloup, Derôme—each and all have their admirers, who profess for their works a "culte" such as others profess for those of the primitive Italian masters, for the flowery visions of Botticelli or for the exquisite pottery of Della Robbia. Nor, any more than the lovers of painting and pottery, have the lovers of book-binding to limit their admiration to the works of the past. The art of book-binding has had its Renaissance, and while acknowledging respectfully, as all decorative artists must, their indebtedness to the master designers of preceding centuries, the book-binders of the present day can make hold to show work which, from an artistic point of view, often rivals the work of the artists of the past, and which, in material execution, is generally far superior. The modern bookbinder has become an artist like the paint-



GROLIER BINDING IN GREEN AND BLACK.

er, the architect, and the musician, and those who excel in their art have pupils, a studio, a manner of their own. They have their secrets, and their signature is paid for in gold like that of the painters à la mode, and like the painters they have their jealousies, their rivalries, their vogue and their decadence. At one time the English binders are all the rage, and at another the French. At the end of the last century and at the beginning of the present the English were acknowledged to be the first binders of the world, and the great names are those of Charles Lewis, Faulkner, Charles and John Hering, Roger Payne, Clarke, Mead, Baumgarten. Then the French come to the front with Bozerian, Thouvenin, Simier, Purgold, and continue progressing with Capé, Trautz-Bauzonnet, Niedrée, Belz, Duru and others of lesser fame. In

in weather that needed it, "I by the living coal did sit, and glowed, like it." But, for whatever reasons, I loved the room and, remembering it, I can see no reason why a book-room should not be as cheerful as any room in the house, or why the books should make it so formidable as is commonly seen. I suppose there were, in all, not more than five or six hundred volumes in this library I have been describing, but there were enough to last a lifetime. And I may add, by the way, that all these books were handsome copies, in good bindings, and easy and delightful to read. Perhaps what, after all, made the charm of the place was that, while there was so much to be enjoyed there, there was not too much (outside the bookcase) to prevent it being all enjoyed. The prints, the fire in autumn and winter,

er, the architect, and the musician, and those who excel in their art have pupils, a studio, a manner of their own. They have their secrets, and their signature is paid for in gold like that of the painters à la mode, and like the painters they have their jealousies, their rivalries, their vogue and their decadence. At one time the English binders are all the rage, and at another the French. At the end of the last century and at the beginning of the present the English were acknowledged to be the first binders of the world, and the great names are those of Charles Lewis, Faulkner, Charles and John Hering, Roger Payne, Clarke, Mead, Baumgarten. Then the French come to the front with Bozerian, Thouvenin, Simier, Purgold, and continue progressing with Capé, Trautz-Bauzonnet, Niedrée, Belz, Duru and others of lesser fame. In

England, against the above names may be cited those of Bedford and Rivière, perhaps. At the present day the names that figure high above all others are those of Lortic and of Marius Michel. They are the recognized princes of their art, for whose masterpieces the bibliophiles must wait for years, and that, too, with the certitude that at the hands of these artists it costs dearer to dress a volume than it costs to dress a gentleman.

But what an exquisite object a finely-bound book is, and how can a sincere lover of books be insensible to the seduction of a binding? How can his eye fail to be charmed by the jewelry of gilded morocco? In the idle repose of the mind is there not a certain physical delectation in the mere touching and handling of the Levant leather so deliciously polished to the firm smoothness of healthful flesh? But, let it be said at once, the art of book-binding does not admit mediocrity; nothing is less like a superior binding than a cheap and poor binding, and the assemblage of sheets of printed paper between two cardboards inclosed in leather in one homogeneous and perfect whole, in a case which seems as if it had been cast in a mould, is realized only by binders who are masters in their art, and who are paid masters' prices. Book-binding, furthermore, is an art which has this peculiarity, according to Charles Nodier, that hitherto it has not produced more than three first-class workmen in a century. It is an art which can only be thoroughly appreciated by the delicate, by the lovers of things exquisite and perfect. It is an art in which the French adepts have from the beginning given proof of charming skill, and in which they are to-day the masters of the world. Such an art is worthy of study, even on the part of those—and they are the immense majority—who cannot think of dressing their books in full morocco either adorned or unadorned with hand-tooling. It is worthy of study for the same reason that all arts are worthy of study, because its creations are capable of producing pleasurable sensations, and those pleasurable sensations are all the more pleasurable as they become more vivid, that is to say, more intelligent.

Books hold the place of honor in the chattels of civilized society. They are the symbols of the superiority of civilization over barbarism and at the same time, in the style of the printing and especially in the style of the covers, they are infallible indices of the condition of a nation in matters of art. And this is a further and more cogent reason for studying book-binding, for besides the fine jewelry of crushed morocco, privilege of the wealthy alone, there are the various kinds of current book-covers in cloth, paper and other materials, the covers of the books that we buy to read in the railway train, the covers of our gift books, the covers of the works of our popular novelists and poets. Between these covers stamped off by thousands in steam-presses and the marvel of hand-tooling, over which the patient artist has spent weeks of delicate labor, the difference is immense. But the designer of the machine-stamped cover will design none the worse for being acquainted with the work of the great artists; and the public would be less readily satisfied with untasteful, inappropriate or mistaken designs if it were familiar with some of the main principles which have guided the great book-binders from the earliest times up to the present day. The subject may seem at first sight technical and of small general interest; it is in reality of almost as great general interest as dress. Books are our wisest counsellors, our safest guides, our truest friends; we surely ought to know how to dress them.

The object of book-binding is to cover literary productions so as to protect and preserve them, while neglecting none of the means fitted to embellish this envelope, whether of perfection of workmanship or of the brilliancy, and, above all, the choice of designs destined to adorn the cover of the book; all this work remaining of course in proportion and harmony with the merit, the value, and the nature of the volume. Before the invention of printing binding scarcely existed as a separate art; it was only an art when the goldsmith, the jeweller, the enameller or the ivory-worker was called upon to enrich the cover proper. But the missals and manuscripts of those days were immense in size and weight. In the Middle Ages a book was worth an estate, and a psalter, for instance, was transmitted from owner to owner with lengthy legal formalities or even bequeathed by will in usu-

fruct. On the other hand, it must be remembered that the psalters and missals in question were equivalent to a modern picture-gallery, for they generally contained an accumulation of pictures and miniatures of fifteen or twenty different artists, the work of years. Even an ordinary book without illuminations was a treasure, as may easily be conceived when it is remembered that the process of calligraphing the works of Virgil, for example, on vellum required a whole year's work. Such books demanded an envelope in keeping with their worth, and at the same time with their weight and bulk, and so the bindings of the Middle Ages were the combined work of the carpenter, the metal-worker, the goldsmith and the jeweller. The heavy side boards, sometimes more than half an inch thick, were, so to speak, upholstered in leather, vellum, velvet or satin; fitted with metal hinges, corners and clasps; adorned with plates of gold, silver or brass; studded with nails like the door of a fortress to save the covering from wear and friction; embroidered with flowers, filigree, beads and pearls, and even inlaid with the enamels of Limoges, a luxury which has been happily revived by some modern bibliophiles. In the production of these composite works the binder's share was simply the preparation of the ground for the decorative artists.

The invention of printing caused an immediate fall in the rarity and value of books, which then became simply instruments of knowledge or of pleasure. The facility with which books could be procured caused less value to be set upon them, and in order to provoke and to meet the public demand, the great object of the publishers was to produce books cheaply and to sell them cheaply. Henceforward, books which by their material composition were in themselves rare and precious objects, remained only a tradition, a tradition kept up for the delectation of an élite of book-lovers by publishers who were themselves book-lovers. Such publishers were the famous printers of Rome and Venice, who never printed an edition of a celebrated author without striking off a few copies on vellum or on some special paper, copies which they had illuminated and clad in rich bindings to be offered in homage to great dignitaries, patrons of letters and honorable corporations. Hence that tradition of "éditions de luxe" which has been revived and carried to silly excess in our own times, and hence, too, in binding, the distinction between artistic binding proper, bindings for bibliophiles and ordinary commercial or trade bindings, which of course may be just as artistic only in a different way. Then, with this revolution in books, this transformation of the manuscript into a portable printed volume, a new race of collectors springs into existence. The love of books becomes a passion in which not only princes can indulge, but also gentlemen and well-to-do citizens who could now lodge in a single chamber a library such as twenty monasteries could hardly have hoped to possess before printing replaced calligraphy. Books were entering upon that artistic change which was destined to reduce them and refine them down from the colossal and clumsy tomes of the Middle Ages to the condition of exquisite jewels. It is to these collectors of the time of the Renaissance, who were the first to concern themselves about the material beauty and correctness of the interior of books, and about the solidity and artistic decoration of the envelope destined to preserve them from the ravages of time, that the book-lover owes his two great sources of joy, the traditions of fine editions and fine bindings. His spiritual ancestors are the great bibliophiles of the sixteenth century, the Italians Maioli, Cardinal Bonelli, and Demetrio Canevari, the Doge Cicogna, the Treasurer Jean Grôlier, President de Thou, and those right royal book-lovers, François I., Diane de Poitiers, Henri III., Catherine de Medicis and Henri IV.

The materials used for covering books are various. The binders of the sixteenth century hesitate between silk, velvet, calf and vellum, and between wooden side-covers and pasteboard. This change of material had a curious, indirect effect on the fortune of letters. When the wooden side-boards were abandoned, the old binders seized upon anything to make their pasteboards, pages of old books, prints, almanacs, or wood-cuts. The earliest playing-cards that we possess were discovered by intelligent excavations in the pasteboards of old book-binding. So, too, when parchment came into fashion for binding, many precious manuscripts were mutilated or destroyed by

thrifty binders. Besides the above-mentioned materials, morocco, Russia leather, pigskin, sheepskin and various preparations of goatskin were used, but morocco very early took the highest place—a place which it still keeps undisputed. But in morocco leather there is great difference, due to its origin and manufacture. The amateurs are particular about the grain, about the beauty and depth of the dye, and, above all, about the "écrasement," or crushing. Crushed morocco is probably due to an accident, although now it has become a desideratum. The gros-grain morocco or Levant leather used by the old binders was not produced by any particular process of manufacture. The goats of the Eastern countries whence the skins came had a very thick and coarse epiderm; the leather was therefore rough to the touch, full of asperities, readily torn, and incapable of receiving gilding unless previously crushed into a smooth and flat surface. Hence, doubtless, the usage of crushing the grain of morocco which gives such beautiful results especially in the nude simplicity of the Jansenist binding. For commercial bindings cheap skins and various kinds of paper and tissues imitating morocco or Russia leather have been used. At present, commercial bindings are covered either with paper or tissues, prepared in different ways, and stamped with ornamentations of all styles. But in these remarks there is not space to treat of the material side either of artistic or commercial bookbinding. The construction of a binding requires constant care and a certain amount of taste on the part of the workman who executes it, but it is evident that the really artistic side of the binding consists in the ornamentation, and it is to this aspect of the art that our attention is to be mainly directed. THEODORE CHILD.

THE combined cabinet and bookcase illustrated on page 111, designed for library or hall, is an imposing piece of furniture, noteworthy for simplicity of construction and varied and appropriate decoration. The lower portion forming the closed cupboards, projects three inches from the upper and glazed part, while the central portions of the cabinet, upper and lower, project three inches from the wings. Over the wings are convenient shelves for pottery, and a canopied shelf forms the centre. The cabinet is of black walnut, the pillars being of beautifully mottled French walnut. The glass of the doors has a bevelled edge of one inch. A feature worthy of notice in this design is, that the four lower doors, though nearly of the same size and shape, are not monotonous repetitions, but are rendered strikingly different, first by a difference of treatment of the upper rail of the frames, and secondly by dissimilarity of design between the two outer and the two inner panels. The bold leaves of the maple and horse-chestnut form the outer designs, while the delicate foliage and blossoms of the California lily and the marigold are used for the central designs. Further diversity, it may be noted, is obtained by the dissimilar treatment of the frames of the four glazed doors. The lower panels are cut one and a quarter inches deep. The bold design of sunflowers, under the canopy, is merely surface treatment, with a stamped background.

RECENT embroidery in sheer material is exquisite and may well tempt idle hands. There are bureau-covers of which the end is embroidered with large open-petalled flowers overlapping one another. These are lightly wrought in blue, pink, and yellow silks, each tint containing several shades. The centres are in knot-stitch of yellow and brown, and radiating lines of silk are carried out to the edge of the petals. The effect is of kaleidoscopic hues over the entire surface. A new design for work in darned stitch on such stuff is groups of crescent moons in the favorite colors, amber, blue, and pink.

PONGEE, which is now phenomenally cheap, is greatly used for bureau-coverings and chair-backs. A chair-back, for example, in ribbon work shows the foliage in yellow browns, which harmonize well with the color of the pongee. The flowers are daisy-petalled blossoms made out of narrow pink ribbons of two tints, with brown knot-stitched centres. Ribbon work in which only the narrow ribbon is used has outlasted the coarser ribbon work, since the narrow ribbons are more durable and capable of better effects.